

6.18.217

To the Maior, Aldermen, and Inhabitants of N.



Hat which heretofore I haue propounded to you (right Worshipfull and beloued) in teaching, I do now publish to all men by printing, to wit, mine opinion of the vnlawfulness of games consisting in chance. My desire is either information, if I erre in iudgement, or reformation of so leud a practise. But whether I erre or no (which yet I would gladly vndeſtand, * for I ought not to teach an vtruth, though to Gods glorie) yet there is none, zealous indeed againſt ſinne, deſirous from the heart to reclame ſinners, and who deeply conſidereth the grieuous abuſes, which accompane dicing and carding (as horrible ſwearing, dangerous quarelling, losſe (I ſay not of good hours, but) of nights and dayes, and the pitifull vndoing of roo too manie) but will remembre that all things are not expedient, which are lawfull, and therefore abſtaine from ſuch Heatheniſh paſte-times, that, if by their example they cannot reforne, they may be ſure * they do not conſirme gameteſters in their inordinate walking. Which respect, the 7. Injunction forbidding Minifters to vſe theſe vnlawfull games, may be ſuppoſed to haue. Now that which authoſitic exacteth of Minifters, doth Religion require of all true Profefſiours. For as the one are to be ensamples to the flocke, ſo the other are to be * lights in the world. And therefore as P A V L faſh, * If meat offend my brother, I will eare no fleſh while the world ſtandeth. So euerie true Chiftian ſhould ſay, and that with mere reſolution (for Play is not ſo neceſſarie as meat) If play offend my brother, who ſeeing me haue knowledge, play, is boldned to follow gaming, I will not play while the world ſtandeth. Which care vnto edification if all, who haue the * word in their mouthes, and would not be thought to haue to be reformed, would maſtiff in their ſeruice conuertion, and if Magiftrates, who ſhould not * carie the ſword in vaine, would do what they may by * law, to baniſh theſe forbidden paſt-times, or rather loſt-times, I doubt not, but that preaching and writing againſt them would more mightyly preuaile, and this good would come of it, manie would applie themſelues to better exerciſes, there would be leſſe time miſpent in Alehouses, and God leſſe prouoked to diſpleaſure againſt vs. But theſe things I reſerve to the conſideration of he wiſe and this my Dialogue to the iudgement of the Godly, chiefly to you, whose good I wiſh eſpecially. Farewell.

A Dialogue againſt playing at Cardes and Tables.

Professor



Ir howſoever I am perſwaded by that which I reade in the common places of Peter Martir, Par. 2. pag. 525. b. that Dice (condemned both by the Ciuill lawes, and by the Fathers) are therfore vnlawfull, because they depend vpon chaunce: yet not ſatiſfied with that which he writeth of Table-playing, pag. 526. b. I would craue your opinion concerning playing at Tables and Cards.

Preacher. Having the iudgement of ſo excellent a Diuine, ſo far as I can learene out of Gods word, Cards and Tables ſeeme to me no more lawfull (though iſſle offenſive) the dice. For Table-playing is no whit the more lawfull, because Plato compares the life of man therunto, then a thare is the more iuſtifiable, because Chrift compareth his ſecond comming, to Burglarie in the night, Matt. 24.43.44. Againe, if Dice be wholly euill, because they wholly depend vpon chance, then Tables and Cards muſt neades be ſomewhat euill, because they ſomewhat depend vpon chance. Therfore conſider well this reaſon, which condenmeth the one alwelas by other: Lots are not to be uſed in ſport, but games coſiſting in chance, as dice, cards, Tables, are lots, therfore not to be uſed in ſport.

Profel. For my better inſtruction, proue that Lots are not to be uſed in ſport.

Preach. Conſider with regard theſe three things: First, that we read not in the ſcriptures that Lots were uſed but only in ſerious matters both by the Jewes, Iof. 18.10. and Gentiles Ion. 1.7. Secondly, that a Lot in the nature thereof doth as neceſſarily ſuppoſe the ſpeciall prouidence and determining preſence of God as an oth in the nature thereof doth ſuppoſe the teſtifying preſence of God. Neaſo, that (as in an oth) ſo in a Lot prayer is expreſſed or to be underſtood, I.Sam. 14.41. Thirdly, that the proper end of a Lot (as of an oth, Heb. 6.16.) is to end a coniouerſie, and therefore for your better inſtruction exameine theſe reaſons. Whatſoever directly, or of it ſelue, or in a ſpeciall manner, tendeth to the aduancing of the name of God, is to be uſed religiouſly, Mal. 1.6.7. and not to be uſed in ſport: as we are not to pray or ſweare in ſport, Exod. 20.7. Eſa. 29.13. Ier. 4.2. but the uſe of Lots, directly of it ſelue and in a ſpeciall manner tendeth to aduancing of the name of God, in attributing to his ſpeciall prouidence in the whole and immediate diſpoſing of the Lot, and expeſting the event, Pro. 16.33. Act. 1.24,26. Therefore the uſe of Lots is not to be in ſport. Againe, we are not to tempt the Almighty by a vaine diſire of maniſtation of his power and ſpeciall prouidence, Psal. 78.18.19. Eſa. 7.12. Matt. 4.6.7. But by uſing Lots in ſport we tempt the Almighty, vainly deſiring the maniſtation of his ſpeciall prouidence in his immediate diſpoſing, Therfore, &c. Lastly, whatſoever God hath ſanctified to a proper end, is not to be peruered to a worse, Matt. 21.12.13. But God hath ſanctified Lots to a proper end, namely to end coniouerſies, Num. 26.55. Pro. 18.18. therefore man is not to peruered them to a worse: namely to play, and by playing to get away another mans money, which without coniouerſie is his owne. For the common ſaying is, Sine lucro friger lulus, no gaining, cold gaming.

Profel. God hath ſanctified Psalms to the praise of his name, and bread and wine to repreſent the body and bloud of our crucified Sauour, which be holy ends: and the children of God may ſing Psalms to make themſelues merie in the Lord, and ſeed vpon bread and wine not onely for neceſſity but to cheare themſelues: why then may not Gods Children recreate themſelues by lottery notwithstanding God hath ſanctified the ſame to end a coniouerſie?

Preach. Because we find not in the ſcriptures any diſpenſation for recreation by lottery as we do for godly mirth by ſinging, Iam. 5.13. and for religiouſ and ſober chearing our ſelues by eating and diſſenting, Deut. 8.9.10. And therefore (it being withall conſidered that the ends you ſpeak of, be not proper, though holy) it followeth, that God who only diſpoſeth the Lot touching the event, and is therfore a pincipall actor, is not to be ſet on worke by lottery in any caſe but when he diſpeneſt with vs, or giueſt vs leaue ſo to do: But diſpenſation for recreation by lottery cannot be ſhewed, Therfore, &c.

Profel. Lots may be uſed for profit in a matter of right, Num. 26.55. why not for pleasure?

Preach. Then othes may be uſed for pleasure, for they may ſo profit, in a matter of truth, Exod. 22.8.11. But indeed lots (as othes) are not to be uſed either for profit or pleasure, but only to end a coniouerſie.

Profel. The wit is exerciſed by Tables and Cards, therefore they be no lots.

Preach. Yet Lotterie is uſed by calling Dice, and by ſhuffling and cutting, before the wit is exerciſed. But how doth this follow? Because Cards & Tables be not naked Lots, conſiſting only in chance (as Dice) they are therefore no lots at all. Although (being uſed without cogging, or packing) they conſiſt principally in chance, from whence they are to receive deſinatatiō. In which reſpect a Lot is caſled in Latin Sors, that is, chance or hazard. And Lyra vpon Prou. 16. Saith, To uſe Lots, is, by a variable event of ſome ſenſible thing, to determine ſome doubtful or uncertaine matter, as to draw cuts, or to cast Dice. But whether you will call Cards and Tables Lots, or no, you play with chance or uſe Lotterie. Then conſider whether exerciſe of wit doth ſanctifie playing with lottery, or playing with lottery make ſuch exerciſe of wit a ſin, Hag. 2.13.14. For as calling God to witneſs by vaine ſwearing is a ſinne, 2. Cor. 1.12. ſo making God an vmpier, by playing with lottery muſt needs be a ſin: yea, ſuch a ſin as maketh the offendre (in ſome respects) more blameworthy. For there be mo occasions of ſwearing then of lottery. Secondly, vaine othes moſt commonly ſlip out at vnawares, whereas Lots cannot be uſed but with deliberation. Thirdly, ſwearing is to ſatiffie other wheras this kind of lottery is altogether to fulfiill our own luſts. Therfore take heed, that you be no guilty of peruering the ordiſtance of the Lord, of taking the name of God in vaine, & of tempting the Almighty, by a gamesome putting off things to hazard, and making play of lottery, except you thiſke that God hath no gouernment in vaine actions, or hath diſpeneſt with ſuch lewd games.

Profel. In ſhooting there is a chaunce by a ſodaine blaſt, yet ſhooting is no lottery.

Preach. It is true: for that chance commeth by accident, and not of the nature of the game, to be uſed.

Profel. Lots are ſecret, and the whole diſpoſing of them is of God, P. 16.33. but it is otherwife in Tables and Cards.

Preach. Lots are caſt into the cap by man, and th. & open... expreſſe should be ſuſpected: but the diſpoſing of the chance is ſecret, that it may be chaunce indeed, and wholly of God, who directeth all things, Pro. 16.13.9.33. So in Tables, man by faire caſting Dice truly made, and in Cards, by ſhuffling and cutting, doth openly diſpoſe the Dice and Cards ſo, as wherby a variable event may follow: but it is onely and immediatly of God that the Dice be ſo caſt, and the Cards ſo ſhuffled and cut, as that this or that game followeth, except there be cogging and packing. So that in faire play mans wit is not exerciſed in diſpoſing the chance, but in making the beſt of it being paſt.

Profel. The end of our play is recreation, and not to make God an vmpier: but recreation (no doubt) is lawfull.

Preach. It may be the ſouldiers had no ſuch end when they caſt lots for Chrift his coat, Matt. 27.25. but this ſhould be your end when you uſe lottery, as the end of an oth ſhould be, to call God to witneſſe. Therfore as ſwearing, ſo lottery, without due reſpect is ſinne. Againe, howſoever recreation be your pretended end, yet remember that we muſt not do euill that god may come of it, Rom. 3.8. And that therefore we are to recreate our ſelues by lawfull recreations. Then ſee how Cards and Tables be lawfull.

Profel. If they be not abuſed by ſwearing or brawling, playing for too long time, or for too much money.

Preach. Though I am perſwaded that it is not lawfull to play for any money, conſidering thanks cannot be giuen in faith for that which is ſo gotten, Deut. 23.18. Eſa. 6.1.8. Gameſters worke not with their hands the thing that is god, to be free from ſtealing, Ephe. 4.28. and the loſer hath not an anſwerable benefit for his money ſo loſt, Gen. 29.15. contrarie to that equitie which Aristotle by the light of nature hath taught long ſince, Eth. I. 5.c.4. yet I grant that Cards and Tables ſo uſed as you ſpeak, be leſſe ſinfull, but how they be lawfull I ſee not yet.

Profel. God men and well learned uſe them.

Preach. We muſt liue by precepts, not by examples, except they be vndoubtedly god. Therefore examine whether they be good, and well learned in ſo doing or no. For euerie man may erre, Rom. 3.4.

Profel. It is not god to be too iuſt, or too wiſe, Ecl. 7.18.

Preach. It is not god to be too wicked or too wiſh, Ecl. 7.19. in diſpifing the word of God, Pro. 1.22. and not regarding the weaſonnes of other, Rom. 1.4. 21. Let us therefore beware that we loue not pleasure moſe then Godlineſſe, 2. Tim. 3.4.